

## **Maryland Department of Transportation Oyster Funding Guidelines FY15 - FY19**

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) has committed to work with Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and all appropriate stakeholders in a scientifically robust and transparent effort to improve Maryland's oyster population and associated industries. In support of this effort, MDOT has agreed to provide DNR \$2M per year FY15 – FY19 to help achieve this goal. As described in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the funds should be used to support all aspects of Maryland's oyster recovery and restoration efforts; the public fishery, the sanctuary/restoration program, and the development of a robust aquaculture industry.

The objective of the 'MOA' for this funding is to witness a scientifically demonstrable improvement in oyster populations and fisheries over this 5 year period. It is recognized that restoring Maryland's oyster population and industry will be a decadal process, but it is hoped that we can demonstrate movement in the right direction over a 5 year period. As such, the funding should go to both scientifically defensible on-the-ground projects, and appropriate monitoring and assessment necessary to demonstrate progress. Annual allocation of the funding should be vetted through a transparent process open to comment by all stakeholder groups.